

Remarks

Claims 1 – 18 are pending in the present application. Claims 1 – 7 were withdrawn from consideration based on a telephone conversation with the Examiner. Applicants herewith affirm that election. Claims 1 – 18 were rejected. Claims 19 – 24 are added in the present amendment.

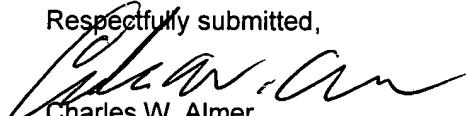
In the Office Action the Examiner indicated that claims 8 – 18 would be allowable if amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Applicants are grateful for this indication.

Claims 9 and 10 were objected to due to informalities. Claims 9 and 10 have been amended to correct the noted informalities. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner withdraw the objections to claims 9 and 10 in view of the present amendments.

Claims 8 – 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. Claim 8 has been amended to include substantially the limitation of the hydraulic fixing agent of claim 1. Claims 8, 10, 15, 16 and 18 have been amended to delete the narrow ranges and limitations from the same claims as the broader ranges and limitations. New claims 19 – 24 have been added to include the narrower ranges and limitations. Claim 15 has been amended as suggested by the Examiner. Claim 17 has been amended to correct the lack of proper antecedent basis for "the subsurface". Accordingly, in view of the amendments, it is respectfully submitted that claims 8 – 18 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. If there are any issues that the Examiner wishes to discuss, please contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



Charles W. Almer
Reg. No. 36,731
Tel. No. 908 707-3738

National Starch and Chemical Company
10 Finderne Avenue
Bridgewater, NJ 08807
June 8, 2005